

THE EVOLUTION OF ORNAMENT.

BY THE EDITOR.

CROSSES are now worn as ornaments, which is the third stage in an interesting process of evolution. The savage, who is afraid of evil spirits, defends himself by amulets which he hangs before his mouth, nose, and ears, to prevent their entering through these openings of the head, and also on his feet, arms, and breast. Thus we find men and women decked with rings, necklaces, and pendants of all kinds. Ear-lobes, lips, and nose are pierced for the purpose of having the protecting charms attached. Feathers are stuck into the hair, and the head is mounted with horns or the jaws of wild animals. This is the first stage, which we characterise as a belief in magic.



NOSE-RING.

As worn by an Egyptian woman of the present age. (After Lane.
From Riehm. *Hdw. d. B. A.*, p. 1073.)

This primitive and superstitious state of things gradually changes through a diminution of the trust placed in the efficacy of magic power. The practice of wearing talismans, however, continues partly through habit, partly through love of the traditional totems which now become emblems, a kind of coats of arms. Though they are no longer believed to be endowed with supernatural power, they still serve the purpose of indicating the clan of the wearer, his affiliation with a society as well as the degree he has attained in it. This is the second or emblematic stage, which

is a period in which the right to use a special coat of arms with a crown of five or seven balls is a question of grave importance and may lead to protracted law suits.

The third stage begins when the societies and the degrees of rank lose first their special privileges, then their rank, and finally even their historical interest. But society continues to use the old emblems. People have grown accustomed to them and regard them as beautiful. Society now toys with them, and the ancient

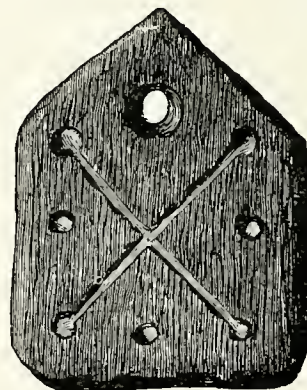


VIRA BHADRA.

From Moor's *Hindu Pantheon*,
pl. xxiii, p. 105.¹



A VASE COVERED
WITH CROSSES,
FOUND IN LAY-
BACH.²



A DOTTED CROSS STANDING
ON EDGE. Neolithic orna-
ment of the cave-dwellers
of Franconia. (Museum
of Munich. After Johan-
nes Ranke.)

emblems are now worn as mere ornaments. This is the third and ornamental stage.

In time the ornamental stage may give way to a fourth period which will be the neglect of ornament. People will then become

¹ Vira Bhadra, a son and an Avatar of Siva mentioned by Moor as a popular hero of extensive celebrity among the Hindus, carries a Latin cross on his helmet in the place where modern soldiers wear the coat of arms of their country. The illustration of Vira Bhadra "was drawn from a brass cast nine inches high in very bold relief, the principal figure projecting considerably."

² After Mortillet, *Musée préhistorique*. From Zmigrodzki, No. 161.

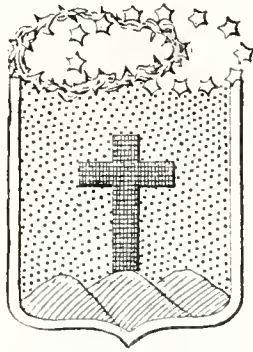
aware of the fact that the wearing of ornaments is a survival of savagery, and they will continue wearing them only when it serves a purpose. The tendency will be toward simplicity and the avoidance of the gaudy and showy. This fourth stage, which is a period of neglect, sets in with a change of taste when the last trace of the notion that a certain piece of ornament is desirable has been lost.

The fourth period is occasionally followed by the archaistic stage, which arises from a love of antiquities and consists in a return to ancient forms because they are ancient.

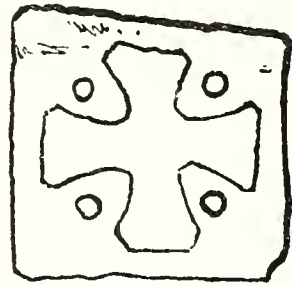
These five stages, however, must not be conceived as being historically distinct periods; for, first, different strata of society belonging to different phases in the evolution of culture live peacefully and contemporaneously together; and, secondly, the different ornaments do not pass through their stages simultaneously. The lip-rings were abandoned first; nose-rings are mentioned in the



THE CROSS AS A NECK-
ORNAMENT.¹



JESUS CHRIST'S BRAZIL-
IAN COAT-OF-ARMS.¹



AN ANCIENT PAGAN
STONE.²

Bible as befitting a beautiful face and are worn in some parts of Syria and Egypt even to-day. Finger-rings are in use at present, although it is now deemed a mark of bad taste if there is a display of many and showy rings that make the hand look like a jeweler's shop. The wedding-ring honorably maintains its place in the second stage as an emblem of faithfulness, while the rings of the upper arm have become a matter of the past, except for masquerades.

When Eliezer met Rebekah at the well, he put a "ring upon her nose," which the translator, being unable to understand that

¹ After Schiemann's *Tiryns*, 36. From Zmigrodzki, *loc. cit.*, No. 101.

² Preserved in the church of Inowroclaw near Posen. Zmigrodzki, *loc. cit.*, No. 144.

The cross preserved in the church of Inowroclaw is, according to the statement of its priest made to Dr. Zmigrodzki (*Gesch. der Swastika*, p. 183), of pagan origin. The church is very old and was presumably built in the eleventh century on the site and from the materials of a pagan temple. It contains in the Presbytery on the left side of the main altar six granite blocks with several sculptures, one being a dog and a pig upside down, which is an evidence of their being inserted at random. Besides the dotted cross here reproduced, there are three more crosses on these ancient stones.



SAMSI RAMAN III., WITH A CROSS ON HIS BREAST.¹ (See footnote, opposite page.)

the Hebrew patriarchs differed so much in taste from ourselves, changes to earring. Even men have worn nose-rings, as appears from Job xlii. 2, where we read that every one of Job's friends gave him money and one nose-ring.²

Herr Ohnefalsch-Richter has pointed out that the goddess Aphrodite-Astarte at Cyprus (as represented in a statue) wore a nose-ring (*Bulletin of the Société d'Anthrop.* Paris, Dec. 1888; cf. Reinach, *Chronique de l'Orient*, 3^{me} série, t. IV., 1886).

Nose-rings are still worn to-day by some of the lower classes of the Orient, especially Egypt. According to Lane (III., p. 214) the ring is generally worn in the right nostril, as shown in the illustration; it is from 1 to 1½ (sometimes even 3) inches in diameter and is ornamented with three or four balls or other pendants. Ardieux (III., 252) mentions it as a joke common among the Arabians that the men try to kiss their women through the nose-ring.

With many of us of the present generation, the cross is now in its third, sometimes even in its fourth, stage. Some people have purposely begun to discard it, while to others it is a mere ornament, which is used without any reason whatever. Would not the cross in its Christian significance as referring to the martyr-death of Christ be glaringly out of place on the bosom of a belle at a ball? Yet how often is the cross used under similar circumstances, and no one sees any incongruity in it.

Coats of arms have lost their significance in America; yet they are not infrequently used, indicating a revival of the sense for tradition which had been almost lost in the New World.

There is no objection whatever to Americans' continuing the use of coats of arms, but I would suggest that those interested in American heraldry should come to an agreement to replace the crowned helmets of European coats of arms by some befitting American symbol, say, for instance, a ribbon of thirteen stars, which might be white for Northern families, red for Southern families, and blue for the wide West. Should a more elaborate design be desired for special purposes, we suggest an Indian head, such

¹ British Museum. From Lenormant, Vol. IV., p. 206. The same cross is represented on the breast of other kings and it occurs otherwise on monuments, together with the sun and the moon, in a style similar to that in which Ahura Mazda is pictured above Persian kings, which indicates that it must have been the emblem of deity, perhaps a monotheistic conception of God.

² The word נִדְזֵם (*nedzem*), literally the "piercer," denotes nose-ring or earring in contrast to arm and finger-ring. Its significance as "nose-ring" becomes obvious through the passages Gen. xxiv. 47, Is. iii. 21, Prov. xi. 22, where the nose is specially mentioned in the original, while in Gen. xxxv. 4 it means "earring." In Job xlii. 2 the meaning "nose-ring" is preferable, because it is expressly stated that Job received *one* piercing-ring, not two. In Judges viii. 24-25 the meaning is doubtful.

as appears on our pennies, encircled by thirteen stars or some other unmistakable emblem of the New World.

The thwart or figure of intersecting lines has twice passed through the five stages of this development: first as the pagan symbol of life and bliss and then as the Christian cross. The cross was used for exorcism in the beginning of the Middle Ages; it then became the coat of arms of the crusaders as an emblem, and it is now worn for ornament.

The cross is a favorite design in family coats of arms among all the nations of the world. The Union Jack of Great Britain is a combination of three crosses, those of St. George, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick; while simple crosses of various colors appear in the flags of Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Greece, Samoa, etc., not to mention the emblematic crosses of lake-dwellers, and cave-dwellers, and other primitive peoples.

Further, the cross is the form of more than half of the decorations in the world with which kings and emperors feed the ambition of their faithful servants. But very few of these crosses are Latin crosses, or can be interpreted as crosses; they are obviously mere thwarts, and the most ancient of them may date back to pagan times when a thwart—a figure of two intersecting lines—still had its original pagan significance.

At any rate, Assyrian kings wore a cross (or rather a thwart) as a decoration upon their breast which closely resembles modern decorations.

As a curiosum we reproduce here the coat of arms which was officially awarded to Jesus Christ on his being admitted to the nobility of the Empire of Brazil. It shows a black cross mounted upon three green hills in a golden field, and is covered with a double crown of thorns and stars.